

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/699,103

Examiner

BACKHEAN TIV

Applicant(s)

SONNENFELDT ET AL.

Art Unit

2451

- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to Remarks filed on 3/23/10.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-14, 29, 36-42.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
(a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
(b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date 6/2/10.
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☐ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____.

/John Follansbee/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2451

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

Claims 1-14, 29, 36-43 are pending. Claims 15-28, and 30-35 were previously cancelled. The Terminal Disclaimer filed on 3/23/10 is approved.

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Omar M. Wadhwa (64,127) on 6/2/10.

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for initiating an online meeting over a data network between a host party with a first computer and an attendee party with a second computer, where a phone connection exists over a telephone network between a first phone of the host party and a second phone of the attendee party, the method comprising:

receiving a start meeting command at an input mechanism of a first adaptor coupled to both the first phone and the first computer;

in response to the first adaptor receiving the start meeting command, causing, by the first adaptor, the first computer to send a start meeting message over the data network to a data center;

receiving, at the first adaptor from the first computer, a meeting identification that was generated by the data center; storing the meeting identification in the first adaptor; and transmitting the meeting identification from the first adaptor over the telephone network to a second adaptor, which is coupled to both the second phone and the second computer.

2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, comprising: receiving the meeting identification into the second adaptor from the telephone network; and causing by the second adaptor, the second computer to send a join meeting message over the data network to the data center.

3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the telephone network comprises a public switched telephone network.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the data network comprises an internet.

5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising: encoding the meeting identification by the first adaptor prior to transmitting the meeting identification over the telephone network to the second adaptor.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5, wherein the second adaptor receives

the meeting identification by monitoring the phone connection to detect the encoded meeting identification.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6, wherein said encoding converts the meeting identification into a dual tone multiple frequency (DTMF) signal.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising: initiating an audio recording of the meeting by user input on one of said adaptors.

9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
recording audio of the meeting from the phone connection through one of said adaptors to the computer coupled thereto.

10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising: recording audio of the meeting from the phone connection within flash memory of one of the said adaptors.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising: enabling a privilege-to-record field for the attendee prior to allowing an audio recording of the meeting by way of the second adaptor.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising: a third party with

a third computer joining the meeting using a third adaptor which is coupled to both a third phone and a third computer.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising: receiving an audio message from the data center and playing the audio message to one of said parties.

14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 13, wherein the audio message includes instructions relating to the meeting.

15-28. (Canceled)

29. (Currently Amended) An adaptor product configured to bridge a telephone network and a data network, the adaptor product comprising:

means for receiving a start meeting command at the adaptor product, the adaptor product configured to be coupled to both a first phone and a first computer;

means for causing, in response to the adaptor product receiving the start meeting command, the first computer coupled to the adaptor product to transmit a start meeting message over the data network to a data center;

means for receiving and storing into the adaptor product from the first computer, a meeting identification that was generated by the data center; and

means for transmitting the meeting identification from the adaptor product over the telephone network to a second adaptor product.

30-35. (Canceled)

36. (Previously Presented) An apparatus comprising:

a plurality of interfaces operable to couple the apparatus to both a first phone and a first computer; a user input mechanism operable to receive a start meeting command;

a microprocessor operable to cause the first computer coupled to the apparatus to send a start meeting message over a data network to a data center, in response to receipt of the start meeting command at the user input mechanism of the apparatus;

a memory operable to store a meeting identification that was generated by the data center and received from the first computer; and

wherein the microprocessor is further operable to cause the first phone to transmit the meeting identification over a telephone network to a second apparatus, which is coupled to a second phone and a second computer.

37. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 36, further comprising: a codec operable to encode the meeting identification prior to transmission of the meeting identification over the telephone network to the second apparatus.

38. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 36, further comprising: a modem

operable to convert the meeting identification into a dual tone multiple frequency (DTMF) signal.

39. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 36, further comprising: a flash memory operable to store an audio recording of the meeting.

40. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 36, wherein the plurality of interfaces include a Universal Serial Bus (USB) interface operable to couple the apparatus to the first computer and registered jack (RJ) interface operable to couple the apparatus to the first phone.

41. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 36, wherein the plurality of interfaces are further operable to receive an audio message to be played from the data center.

42. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 36, wherein the plurality of interfaces are further operable to receive an audio message, wherein the audio message includes instructions relating to the meeting.

43. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein causing includes sending the start meeting command from the first adaptor to the first computer.

Reasons For Allowance

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The prior art of record does not teach, an adaptor which is coupled to a first phone and a first computer for use in initiating an online meeting/conferencing over a data network, the phone is connected to existing telephone network, the user starts a meeting by using an input mechanism of the adaptor, e.g. push a "start" meeting command (page 5, lines 26-31), in response to the start meeting command, the first computer sends the start meeting message over the data network to a data center, in which generates a meeting identification and sends the meeting identification back to the computer, which sends it to the first adaptor for storing, this meeting identification is then sent over the telephone network to a second adaptor with also has a phone and computer coupled to it(Fig.2).

The closest prior art of record is US Publication 2003/0072429 issued to Slobodin et al., which teaches the use of a telephone adaptor, coupled to a phone, computer, project, and other various devices, Fig.3,4. This telephone adaptor, also uses a data network and voice network, e.g. telephone network Fig.5-11. The system of Slobodin further teaches initiating a dataconference session by manually activating an input key which begins an access negotiation procedure, para.0051. This negotiation procedure uses the voice network, where the adaptor generates audio signals to another adaptor for encoding of a network device access code, para.0051. After receipt of the audio signal at the other adaptor and recognition of the network access code, the dataconference system resumes the audio conference along with the data conference, e.g. transmission of image data.

The differences between the present invention and Slobodin is the present invention's adaptor, once there is an initiation of a start meeting at the adaptor, causes the computer to send a start meeting message to the data center for generation of a meeting identification to start a meeting/conferencing, also see Remarks filed on 3/23/10, pages 8-12, as opposed to Slobodin's adaptor, that once there is an initiation of a start meeting, it sends an audio signal to another adaptor to set up meeting/conferencing. In further, the arguments presented in the Remarks pages 8-12 on 3/23/10, in regards to the combination of Slobodin with other prior art of record is persuasive.

Note: The adaptor product of claim 29, and the apparatus of claim 36 is deemed to be statutory, Fig.2,3, elements 104a,104b, 104c and Fig.4A,B and not that of software products/apparatus, e.g. programs.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to BACKHEAN TIV whose telephone number is (571)272-5654. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Follansbee can be reached on (571) 272-3964. The fax phone

Art Unit: 2451

number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

B. T.
Backhean Tiv
Examiner, Art Unit 2451
6/2/10

/John Follansbee/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2451

